

What to Do if You Have Experienced Sexual Assault

Go to a safe place.

Report the crime immediately by calling 911. Be sure to identify the exact location of the assault.

Seek medical treatment. Go to a SAFE Center of Excellence, a hospital where specially trained doctors & nurses can provide sensitive care and collect evidence. You have the right to have evidence collected, even if you choose not to report the assault to the police. Find a list of SAFE Centers at www.be-SAFENyc.org.

Get support. Seek support from friends, family, rape crisis & domestic violence programs, counselors, or other community resources.

Resources in New York City include:

- For emergencies, call 911
- NYC Police Department Special Victims Report Line: 212-267-RAPE
- NYC Anti-Violence Project 24-hr bilingual hotline for LGBTQ and HIV-affected survivors: 212-714-1141
- Safe Horizon 24-hr multilingual Sexual Assault hotline: (800) 621-HOPE.
- The New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault provides a comprehensive list of victim services online at www.svfreenyc.org

Preventing Sexual Violence in New York City

Rape crisis centers, community-based organizations and advocates are working to prevent sexual assault from occurring in New York City. If you are interested in taking part in prevention efforts in your community contact the New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault, a Center of Excellence in Primary Prevention, to find out how you can be part of the solution (212-229-0345)

Visit Our Website: www.nyc.gov/nypd

Dial 911 for Police Emergencies

Dial 311 for Non-Emergency City Services.

This flyer was created by New York City Alliance Against Sexual Assault, Bellevue Hospital SAFE Center, Elmhurst Hospital SAFE Program, Hollaback! Center for Anti-Violence Education and Safeslope in collaboration with the New York City Police Department and the New York County District Attorney's Office.

Making Communities Safer from Sexual Violence

- **Basic Information About Sexual Violence**
- **Ways in Which Communities and Individuals Might Increase Safety**
- **Services Available to Those Who Have Survived an Act of Sexual Violence**

NYPD



WILLIAM J. BRATTON
Police Commissioner

NYPD



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What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence can be much broader than commonly thought and is any attempted or completed sexual act against a person's will, or against a person unable to give permission (consent). Examples may include:

- Rape (forced sexual intercourse) or attempted rape
- Unwanted touching
- Flashing or fondling private body parts
- Making lewd comments or sexually explicit gestures (on its own, not a criminal offense)
- Sexual violence can be accompanied by other crimes such as robbery or burglary

Who perpetrates sexual violence?

Sexual violence is most often perpetrated by someone known to the victim/survivor; however, it can be perpetrated by anyone: A stranger, a person in a position of power or trust; an acquaintance, a relative, a friend, or an intimate partner. Perpetrators often seek people in vulnerable situations.

If you have experienced sexual violence, you are not alone.

In fact, 1 in 5 women, and 1 in 71 men, have been the victim of a sexual assault at some time in their lives. Of these female victims, half report being sexually assaulted by an intimate partner and 40% by an acquaintance. For male victims, 52% report being sexually assaulted by an acquaintance and 15% by a stranger¹.

Increasing Safety

Sexual violence is never the fault of the victim. While work must be done to prevent violence from being perpetrated, there are ways to reduce your risk of (stranger) rape, and increase your sense of safety:

- **Trust your instincts.** They are usually correct. Do not hesitate to call 911 if you question your safety, or to seek help from a bystander.
- **Plan your route along well-lit and busy streets.** If you suspect that you are being followed, stay away from quiet blocks and head for a store you know to be open.
- **Be alert and aware of your surroundings.** Keep your head up when walking alone, and do not wear headphones or display valuables. Have your keys ready before you reach your door, and stay alert as you enter the building.
- If you plan to drink alcohol in a public place, only accept drinks from a server, stay with a friend, be wary of getting into a medallion or livery cab alone and/or call a friend or family member to assist.. **Consider sharing a cab, car service, or ride from a friend when coming home late, or walk with a friend.**
- **Consider a self-defense course.** The Center for Anti-Violence Education offers free and low cost courses for women, youth, LGBT communities, and survivors throughout NYC: (718-788-1775) www.caeny.org
- If your partner or spouse is abusing you, remember you do not deserve to be hurt verbally, physically, or emotionally. Create a safety plan (where to go, what to take) if you need to leave in a hurry.

How to Intervene

You can make your community safer one action at a time, but too often people feel helpless when they witness harassment or assault. Here are a few things you can do to intervene, safely. Be very careful and only intervene if you think that it is safe. Every situation is different. Some things you may consider are:

- **During the act of harassment, look for someone who might assist (a police officer, MTA employee, store owner etc.) and call 911.**
- **After the harassment, ask the person who was harassed if they are OK, and if there is anything you can do to help. If there is – help them out.**
- **After the harassment, offer to escort the harassed individual to the police station or another safe location.**
- **Contact the police to report the harassment.**

If you witness a sexual assault and it is not safe to intervene, **call 911 immediately.** *You do not have to give your name when you call 911. If you wish to remain anonymous or keep information confidential, tell the operator.*



¹ Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M.R. (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.